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NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION AS A STRATEGIC ASSET: THREE CASE STUDIES

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1. Introduction

National Historic Landmark designation is the highest, most exclusive, official recognition the United States government bestows on historic resources. These buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects possess exceptional value in illustrating and interpreting the rich and diverse heritage of the country. Regardless of geographic location, they represent events, people, ways of life, ideas, and aesthetic expressions related to national developments in history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. As such, National Historic Landmarks are among America's most significant places.

Despite their status, National Historic Landmarks often struggle with issues of management, maintenance, public awareness, funding, relevance, programming, and interpretation. They are also open to threats from abandonment and neglect; disconnection between the site and its historic use; redevelopment pressures; lack of support; mismanagement; poor maintenance; and demolition. As the nation's most significant historical resources, it is all the more important that these sites have adequate resources to ensure their preservation and use for the benefit of future generations.

Designation can – and should – serve as more than an honorary distinction. National Historic Landmarks have access to certain limited opportunities because of their status. These direct and tangible benefits include technical and planning assistance through the National Park Service's National Historic Landmarks Assistance Initiative; some level of legal protection in Section 106 and Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act;

reporting to Congress and the general public on endangered National Historic Landmarks in the so-called Section 8 Report; and funding from the J. Paul Getty Trust and the Save America's Treasures program. All National Historic Landmarks are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places through which other opportunities are available to them as well.

In addition, National Historic Landmarks can leverage designation to tap into a range of indirect assistance (i.e., those not limited to officially designated properties) and secure other, often intangible, types of support. For example, the official government validation represented by National Historic Landmark designation can serve as confirmation of the relevance of a site and/or the institution that owns or operates it; it can inspire a change in attitude on the part of an owner, a community, local government, private funders, or others; and it can help a steward better understand, define, and interpret the significance of the site for which it is responsible.

This study examines how National Historic Landmarks have incorporated designation into their management strategies to achieve a variety of objectives, such as preserving the structure; raising money; building political, community, and institutional support; clarifying mission and purpose; improving programming and interpretation; renewing relevance; and saving the site.

Three National Historic Landmarks were selected as case studies: Eastern State Penitentiary, the New Century Guild, and the Wagner Free Institute of Science. All three are located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This was a conscious choice to ensure that the sites have had the same opportunities based on their local environment. In all other ways, however, the subjects of the case studies display a range of characteristics, conditions, and

issues related to the resource and its ownership and stewardship. (See **Table 1** for a comparison of the selected National Historic Landmarks.)

The case studies represent different timeframes since designation. They vary in types of owners and stewards (i.e., local government, charitable non-profit, and private institution). At designation, each site had retained the use for which its significance is associated (i.e., a prison, a guild for working women, and a scientific society and museum). Today, two of the three have been able to maintain their use, while the third is a tourist attraction. Two of the three are open to the public. Two of the three are listed in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, which may some day be meaningful in their protection, although the city does not provide heightened levels of protection for National Historic Landmarks even those that are city-owned.[1] One is threatened and has been included in various reports on endangered historic and cultural resources. In addition to telling stories of the American experience, these sites and others like them tell important stories of the challenges faced by National Historic Landmarks and the ways in which designation can be a strategic asset, an effective and versatile tool for strengthening and preserving the country's most significant historic and cultural resources.

[1] Note that even though the New Century Guild is a designated National Historic Landmark, the city has not included it in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The case study on Eastern State Penitentiary further illustrates the lack of specific city level protections for National Historic Landmarks owned by the city.

		EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY 21st St. & Fairmount Ave. Philadelphia, PA	NEW CENTURY GUILD 1307 Locust St. Philadelphia, PA	WAGNER FREE INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE 17th St. & Montgomery Ave. Philadelphia, PA
DESIGNATIONS	National Historic Landmark	1965	1993	1990
	National Register	1966	1993	1989
	Pennsylvania Marker	1996	1997	
	Philadelphia Register	1981		1984
	World Heritage Site			
THREATENED LISTS	Section 8 Report	Since at least 1988		
	World Monuments Watch	1996 & 2000		
	Pennsylvania At Risk	1992		
ORGANIZATION CHARACTERISTICS	Owner Type	Local Government	Tax-Paying Trust	Charitable Non-Profit
	Steward Type	Charitable Non-Profit	Private Organization	Charitable Non-Profit
	Board of Trustees/Directors	X	X	X
USE OF RESOURCE	Profit-Making Use			
	Open to Public	X		X
	Continued Use		X	X
	Interpreted Site	X		X
FUNDING FOR NHLs	Getty Conservation Grant	X		
	Save America's Treasures	X		X

Table 1. Comparison of three case studies.

2. The National Historic Landmarks Program

National Historic Landmarks are tangible representations of the American experience. They are the sites of historical events and homes of prominent Americans. They embody the philosophies and ways of life that shaped the nation and provide information about the past. They are exceptional examples of design or construction. They reflect the country's greatest accomplishments in areas such as science, engineering, architecture, the arts, and literature. They are places associated with profound struggles (e.g., slavery, civil rights, and the labor movement) that affected the course of the nation. National Historic Landmarks document the archeological finds, chart the technological progress, and chronicle the people and ideas that have influenced the development of the United States. They reveal "a landscape shaped by the multiplicity of cultures and traditions that compose our national identity."[2]

Enabling Legislation: Historic Sites Act and National Historic Preservation Act

Although the government of the United States has assumed responsibility for the preservation of nationally significant resources in some form since 1889,[3] the direct legal foundation for a national program of preservation of historic sites – and specifically for the

[2] Allan Chambers, Jr., *National Landmarks, America's Treasures: The National Park Foundation's Complete Guide to National Historic Landmarks* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2000), 1.
[3] In 1889, Congress authorized the President to protect the Casa Grande ruin. See Barry Mackintosh, *The Historic Sites Survey and National Historic Landmarks Program* (Washington, DC: History Division, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1985), 1.

National Historic Landmarks Program – is derived from the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

The Historic Sites Act articulated "a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States."[4] With this Act, Congress charged the National Park Service,[5] on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior, with researching, documenting, and designating historic resources of national significance. Among its responsibilities, the National Park Service was authorized to undertake the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings (also known as the Historic Sites Survey, a "survey of historical and archaeological sites, buildings, and objects for the purpose of determining which possess exceptional value as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States," and to erect commemorative plaques to mark such sites of national significance.[6]

The Survey was the first comprehensive approach to documenting the country's most important historic resources and promoting their preservation as the tangible remnants and expression of the American experience. In its early history, the Survey was employed primarily as the means to enable expansion of the National Park System through Federal acquisition of properties for inclusion as units in the System. In addition, it raised public awareness of resources that the Federal government was unable to acquire but were in need of attention and preservation.[7] Beginning in 1960, however, privately owned sites that possessed exceptional value but remained outside the National Park System were

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[4] *Historic Sites Act of 1935*, Public Law 74-292 (and subsequent amendments). 49 Stat. 666, 16 USC 461.
[5] The National Park Service was established as a bureau of the Department of the Interior in 1916 and assumed responsibility for Federal historic preservation activities in 1933. See Mackintosh, 2-3.
[6] *Historic Sites Act*, 16 USC 462(b) & (g).
[7] Chambers, 2.

granted a new official public recognition – designation as National Historic Landmarks. An alternative to Federal acquisition, National Historic Landmark designation became another tool with which the National Park Service could identify nationally significant resources and encourage their protection and preservation.[8] The Federal government still employs both of these methods of recognizing nationally significant places: (1) acquisition and designation as a unit of the National Park System, and (2) designation as a National Historic Landmark. The former (today, approximately 380 units) automatically receives operational funding from the Federal government but surrenders its former use when it becomes a National Park System property. The latter lacks Federal funding for operations but may continue to function as it had prior to designation. (The case studies presented here all fall into the latter category.)

In 1966, Congress enacted the most consequential law concerning historic preservation since the Historic Sites Act. The National Historic Preservation Act (and its subsequent amendments) structures the national program of preserving historic resources. It has broadened the Federal government's preservation activities to include the following: to recognize resources of regional, state, and local significance in addition to those of national significance; to provide financial and technical assistance; to partner with and extend authority to state and local governments and the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and to encourage preservation of non-Federally owned historic resources by private means, as well as to preserve and serve as steward of Federally owned resources.[9]

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[8] Mackintosh, 116.

[9] *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966*, Public Law 89-665 (and subsequent amendments). 16 U.S.C. 470-1.

Section 101(a) of the Act remains today the legal basis for the National Historic Landmarks Program.

The National Historic Preservation Act also establishes protection for historic properties by requiring Federal agencies to consider the effect of their undertakings on National Historic Landmarks and resources listed or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. (See **Chapter 3** for further discussion of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.)

National Historic Landmark Designation Criteria: Significance and Integrity

The purpose of the National Park Service's National Historic Landmarks Program is to identify nationally significant districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that illustrate or commemorate the history and prehistory of the United States, to designate such resources as National Historic Landmarks, and to encourage their long-range preservation by government agencies, private organizations, and individuals.[10]

Unlike properties in the National Register of Historic Places which can be significant at the national, regional, state, or local level, National Historic Landmarks transcend geographic setting and "illuminate our rich and complex national story."[11] To date, approximately 2,340 National Historic Landmarks have been designated, representing only about three percent of the properties in the National Register.

National significance is evaluated against criteria that focus on significance and integrity. To be designated a National Historic Landmark, a resource must exhibit

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[10] National Historic Landmarks, 36 C.F.R. Part 65, Section 1.
[11] National Park Service, *National Historic Landmarks: Illustrating the Heritage of the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, n.d.).

extraordinary value in illustrating the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and/or culture. To do this, the resource must be associated with at least one of the following:

1. an event that has made a significant contribution to, is identified with, or outstandingly represents, the broad national patterns of United States history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained;
2. the life of a person nationally significant in the history of the United States;
3. a great idea or ideal of the American people;
4. distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style, or method of construction;
5. a composition of integral parts that possesses exceptional historical or artistic significance or commemorates or illustrates a way of life or culture; or
6. the yielding of or the potential to yield information of major scientific importance by revealing new cultures or by shedding light upon periods of occupation over large areas of the United States.

In addition, the resource must retain the integrity of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.[12]

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[12] National Historic Landmarks, 36 C.F.R. 65, Section 4a.

These criteria are utilized by the National Historic Landmarks Survey, one of the two key programs of the National Historic Landmarks Program, in its documentation and evaluation of potential National Historic Landmarks. The Survey is responsible for identifying historic resources of national significance, studying such resources to determine if they are eligible for National Historic Landmark designation, and for nominating potential National Historic Landmarks for designation.

The National Historic Landmark Designation Process

Potential National Historic Landmarks are identified primarily through theme studies conducted by the National Historic Landmarks Survey of major aspects of American history that serve as specific contexts in which the relative significance of related resources can be examined and evaluated. The Survey also conducts special studies of other individual properties (often brought to the attention of the Survey by owners, friends groups, local or state representatives, or others) with apparent, high levels of significance and integrity. After documenting a resource, if the Survey finds it satisfies the selection criteria for designation, it presents a study report to the National Park System Advisory Board's History Areas Committee (comprised of professionals in a range of fields, including historians, architectural historians, archeologists, and anthropologists) which reviews the nominated resource in terms of its significance and integrity, as well as the professional quality of the study. If the History Areas Committee concludes that the resource meets all the criteria, it recommends to the Advisory Board, which in turn recommends to the Secretary of the Interior, that the resource be designated as a National Historic Landmark. During the process, the National Park Service notifies the owner of the property and

appropriate local, state, and national officials that the property is being considered for National Historic Landmark designation and gives them the opportunity to comment on the nomination. When a private individual or group owns the nominated property – nearly half (48 percent) of National Historic Landmarks are privately owned[13] – the owner's concurrence is required for designation. Based on the report, the recommendations of the Advisory Board, and any comments by the owner or officials, the Secretary reviews the nomination and makes a decision on designation.

If the owner wishes, the National Historic Landmarks Survey will present the property with a bronze plaque identifying it as a designated National Historic Landmark. Once designated, the National Historic Landmarks Assistance Initiative (the second key program of the National Historic Landmarks Program, which is discussed below) provides technical and other professional support to encourage the preservation of the resource.

Protection, Management, and Stewardship: Contrast with World Heritage Sites

The National Historic Landmarks Program places primary consideration on significance and integrity in reviewing nominations. It does not take into account, however, whether the resource possesses a management system that is responsible for and capable of overseeing its ongoing maintenance and stewardship. In addition, owners – especially private owners – of National Historic Landmarks are free to manage their property as they choose. Most designated resources are well maintained and may enjoy the support of government, corporations, institutions, and individuals. Others are threatened due to lack

[13] National Park Service, *National Historic Landmarks at the Millennium: A Report to Congress and the American People, 2000-01* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, n.d.), 2.

of care or mismanagement. (See **Chapter 3** for a discussion of the Section 8 Report to Congress, which identifies threatened National Historic Landmarks.) The laws and regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program encourage, but do not mandate, the preservation of historic properties.

In marked contrast, to be eligible for inclusion in World Heritage List maintained by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), cultural and natural properties with "outstanding universal value" are also required to demonstrate that they possess adequate legal protection, management, and planning control mechanisms to ensure their conservation. The Operational Guidelines for the World Heritage Convention state:

> The existence of protective legislation at the national, provincial or municipal level and/or a well-established contractual or traditional protection as well as of adequate management and/or planning control mechanisms is ... essential ... Furthermore, in order to preserve the integrity of cultural sites, particularly those open to large numbers of visitors, the [applicant] should be able to provide evidence of suitable administrative arrangements to cover the management of the property, its conservation and its accessibility to the public."[14]

Potentially, a property can lack those systems, or have ineffective systems, essential for protection, management, and stewardship (which can pose serious threats to the ongoing preservation of the site and the public value gained from the site) and yet still be designated as a National Historic Landmark. This reality makes it crucial that the nation's most significant and irreplaceable historic resources, National Historic Landmarks, are adequately

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[14] United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, "Operational Guidelines: Establishment of the World Heritage List," *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.* <http://www.unesco.org/whc/opgulist.htm> Section I.C., Paragraph (24)(b)(ii).

supported and protected to ensure their preservation for the continued "inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States."

3. Support for National Historic Landmarks

At a conference for owners of National Historic Landmarks in 1994, one speaker told the audience:

> ... sometimes people think that if their property is designated an NHL, that suddenly this mysterious force will surround their NHL and it will never have any problems again. It will never need maintenance and it will never face development pressures and it will always have plenty of money and [it] can never be demolished, and that, somehow, the Federal government will always protect it. Judging from your chuckles, I think that's a point that I don't have to make; you already know that this force field simply does not exist.[15]

If those owners of National Historic Landmarks found this idea laughable, then what does designation as a National Historic Landmark really mean for such properties? If such a force does not exist to preserve America's most important historic resources, in what ways are National Historic Landmarks supported in their effective protection, management, and stewardship? Does designation afford National Historic Landmarks any special protections and opportunities commensurate with their status as resources of the highest national significance? Alternatively, is designation merely an honorary recognition without any real meaning or tools for historic preservation? The answers to these questions depend largely on the National Historic Landmark itself and its owner's or steward's ability both to utilize the few explicit advantages available through the National Historic Landmarks Program and

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[15] Elizabeth Wegman-French, "What It Means to be a National Historic Landmark Owner," in *Preserving Your National Historic Landmark: The Proceedings of the National Historic Landmark Owners' Conference, September 9-10, 1994, Denver, Colorado*, ed. Elizabeth Wegmen-French (Denver: National Park Service, Rocky Mountain System Support Office, Stewardship and Partnership Team, 1994), 19. This book is hereafter cited as *Preserving Your National Historic Landmark*.

other sources and to leverage its designation to attract a variety of indirect or less tangible benefits.

This chapter provides an overview of assistance, resources, and opportunities available to National Historic Landmarks. Several of the benefits are available solely to designated National Historic Landmarks. Some are available to all properties listed on or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and others are not limited to nationally designated resources at all. The chapters that follow will then present three case studies of National Historic Landmarks and analyze their efforts to use designation as an asset to the management strategies of their sites and to tap into these and other opportunities.

The Plaque on the Wall: Honorary Public Recognition

On the most basic level, designation as a National Historic Landmark is an honorary distinction, a public statement on behalf of the Federal government of a property's exceptional integrity and significance in telling about an aspect of the history of the United States. To express this distinction, the National Park Service provides the owner of a National Historic Landmark with a bronze plaque bearing the name of the property and stating its national significance and the year in which it was designated. (See **Figure 1**.) The plaque can be presented to the property at a ceremony with representatives from the National Park Service to generate media, political, and public attention.

In addition, designation raises awareness of the property through inclusion in the National Historic Landmarks Program database, which is accessible online, as well as print

Figure 1. Example of National Historic Landmark plaque.

listings of designated resources, including published books such as *National Landmarks, America's Treasures.*[16]

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmarks gain further recognition and attention within the National Register program as well. In addition, as discussed below, National Register listing makes them eligible for certain benefits available to properties with that distinction.

[16] *National Landmarks, America's Treasures* is published by John Wiley and Sons, Inc. See **Bibliography**.

Protection: Section 106/110 Review and the Section 8 Report to Congress

Owners of National Historic Landmarks can manage their properties in whatever manner they choose, provided no Federal license, permit, or funding is involved. When any Federal agency is involved, however, a review process is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act before the undertaking can proceed.[17] Section 106 states in its entirety:

> The head of any Federal agency having direct or indirect jurisdiction over a proposed Federal or Federally assisted undertaking in any State and the head of any Federal department or independent agency having authority to license any undertaking shall, prior to the approval of the expenditure of any Federal funds on the undertaking or prior to the issuance of any license, as the case may be, take into account the effect of the undertaking on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The head of any such Federal agency shall afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation ... a reasonable opportunity to comment with regard to such undertaking.[18]

Because National Historic Landmarks are also listed in the National Register, they are subject to this review. Federal agencies participating in "any project, activity, or program that can result in changes in the character or use of historic properties" must consider the effect on the property.[19] Section 106 authorizes State Historic Preservation Officers to review Federal undertakings at the state level and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to oversee the review process at the national level.[20] Ultimately, however, the

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[17] In addition to Federal Section 106 review, some states require a similar review process for undertakings of state agencies that may have an impact on historic resources. Pennsylvania, the state in which all three cases studied in this thesis are located, however, does not have a state level 106 review process.

[18] *National Historic Preservation Act*, 16 U.S.C. 470f.

[19] Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties, 36 CFR 800, Section 3(B).

[20] Rodd Wheaton, "Why Do We Care? A History of Preserving the Past," in *Preserving Your National Historic Landmark*, 15-16.

Advisory Council has the power only to comment on the undertaking and lacks the authority to block activities that adversely affect significant historic resources including National Historic Landmarks.

The 1980s amendments to the Historic Preservation Act include Section 110, which expanded and clarified the obligations of Federal agencies for identifying, preserving, and preventing unnecessary damage to historic properties under their jurisdiction. Among its requirements, Section 110(f) states:

> Prior to the approval of any Federal undertaking which may directly and adversely affect any National Historic Landmark, the head of the responsible Federal agency shall, to the maximum extent possible, undertake such planning and actions as may be necessary to minimize harm to such landmark, and shall afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on the undertaking.[21]

The language, "maximum extent possible" and "minimize harm," are quite subjective and open to interpretation. Similar to the Section 106 regulations, Section 110 does not mandate protection of National Historic Landmarks but does ensure some undefined, higher level of consideration by the Federal government for the country's historic resources.

Section 8 of the National Park System General Authority Act of 1970 directs the Secretary of the Interior to report to Congress on the condition of National Historic Landmarks, particularly those that "exhibit known or anticipated damage or threats to the integrity of their resources, along with notations as to the nature and severity of such damage or threats."[22] The purpose of the Section 8 status report – compiled by the National Park Service from data supplied by its regional offices, State Historic Preservation

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[21] *National Historic Preservation Act*, 16 U.S.C. 470h-2(f).
[22] *National Park System General Authority Act* (and subsequent amendments). 90 Stat. 1940, 10 U.S.C. 1a-5(a).

Officers, and owners of National Historic Landmarks – is to alert Congress, the preservation community, and the general public to nationally significant properties that are in trouble and to promote the protection and preservation of these resources.[23]

The biennial report prioritizes National Historic Landmarks by the immediacy and severity of the threats they face to their integrity:

Priority 1: Extensively damaged or in imminent danger (with inadequate or no protective strategies utilized to preserve the property);

Priority 2: Potentially damaged or seriously threatened (but the damage or threat is not yet critical); or

Priority 3: Not endangered with little or no threat.

Threats to National Historic Landmarks result from many accidental and deliberate causes, including demolition, fire, vandalism, natural disasters (e.g., lightning, flood, earthquake), and inappropriate repairs, alterations, and new construction. According to the coordinator of the Section 8 Report, however, "By far, the greatest majority of landmarks are threatened by deterioration and usually that's from lack of funding ... sometimes it's by lack of concern."[24]

Although the majority of designated National Historic Landmarks are preserved and maintained, in 2001 eighteen percent of all National Historic Landmarks were identified as in immediate danger (Priority One) or as under watch (Priority Two) because of impending threats to their integrity. In Philadelphia, for example, three landmarks are on the threatened list (Eastern State Penitentiary, discussed in **Chapter 4**; The Woodlands; and the

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[23] Susan M. Escherich, "The Section 8 Report to Congress on Damaged and Threatened National Historic Landmarks: The Washington View," in *Preserving Your National Historic Landmark*, 25.
[24] Escherich, "The Section 8 Report," 25.

U.S. Naval Asylum), and seven are on the watch list (Boathouse Row; Thomas Eakins House; Fairmount Water Works; Fort Mifflin; Laurel Hill Cemetery; the *U.S.S. Olympia*; and Philadelphia City Hall).[25]

Although a National Historic Landmark may be included as a Priority One or Two property in the Section 8 Report, this classification does not require any action or compliance by the owner or the entity causing the damage or threat to the property. If, however, the threat to the National Historic Landmark is allowed to continue to the point that the resource loses its integrity (i.e., it no longer possesses the significant qualities for which it was designate) however, the National Park Service will recommend the withdrawal of designation by the Secretary of the Interior. Four landmarks lost their designations in 2000.[26] More importantly, when a National Historic Landmark sustains a critical loss of its integrity, the nation loses a significant resource for future generations.

Financial Assistance: Grants, Loans, and Tax Incentives

Financial support for National Historic Landmarks can come from a variety of private and public sources at the national, regional, state, and local levels: city and county governments; State Historic Preservation Offices; the National Park Service; other Federal agencies; local preservation organizations (e.g., Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia); statewide preservation organizations (e.g., Preservation Pennsylvania); the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and foundations, corporations, and individuals.[27]

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[25] National Park Service, *National Historic Landmarks at the Millennium*, 13 & 15. Fairmount Water Works will be removed from the list in 2002.
[26] Ibid., 11.
[27] Susan Escherich, "Partners Preserving National Historic Landmarks," in *NHL Network Newsletter – Special Issue. National Historic Landmarks: A Directory of Preservation Partners* (Fall 2000): 1.

(See **Table 2** for an overview of financial support for which National Historic Landmarks in Philadelphia may be eligible.)

Grants

A fairly recent and prestigious source of funding for the preservation and conservation of historic resources in the United States is the Save America's Treasures Program, a public-private partnership between the White House Millennium Council and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, whose grants are administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.[28] The property for which funding is requested must be a threatened or endangered historic district, site, building, structure, or object of national significance. The guidelines explicitly identify national significance as a threshold criterion for the grants. This means that the property must be designated as a National Historic Landmark or be listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register for national significance. The property and project must also have educational, interpretive, or training value and a clear public benefit. In addition, Save America's Treasures requires the commitment of the current and future owners to the continued repair, maintenance, and administration of the property through a fifty-year preservation easement. The guidelines state that the easement must stipulate that the current and future owners "shall repair, maintain, and administer the premises so as to

[28] Founded in 1998, Save America's Treasures was originally a three-year program. It was extended to a fourth year in the FY 2002 Federal budget. Despite its prestige, the program faces potential cancellation by Congress when it comes up for future extensions. It is therefore a tentative source of support for historic resources in this country.

preserve the historical integrity of the features, materials, appearance, workmanship, and setting that made the property eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.[29]

One of the largest and most prominent sources of grant support for historic resources worldwide is The J. Paul Getty Trust. The Getty Architectural Conservation Grant Program, in particular, provides funds for the conservation of buildings and sites that are of outstanding architectural, historical, and cultural significance. To be eligible for funding, the resource must possess the highest governmental listing of significance available in the country. For properties in the United States that is National Historic Landmark designation. In addition, the property must be owned by a non-profit, charitable, or tax-exempt organization that is committed to its long-term preservation and maintenance, and it must be accessible to or used for the benefit of the public.[30] These provisions and those of the Save America's Treasures Program for the ongoing preservation and maintenance of the property approximate, but do not equal, the protection, management, and stewardship requirements for inclusion on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a national non-profit organization chartered by Congress in 1949 to provide leadership for the nation's preservation efforts, also administers three national funds from which National Historic Landmarks may be eligible to receive grant support. The first, the Preservation Services Fund, does not limit funding to nationally designated properties; rather, it funds preservation planning and public education efforts generally. The second, the Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation

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[29] Save America's Treasures, "FY2002 Federal Save America's Treasures Grants – Guidelines and Application Instructions." Download from *Save America's Treasures Funding* <http://www.saveamericastreasures.org/funding.html> (19 February 2002).
[30] J. Paul Getty Trust. *Grants from the Getty.* <http://www.getty.edu/grants> (19 February 2002).

funds projects that "contribute to the preservation or the recapture of an authentic sense of place." The third, the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors supports the preservation, restoration, and interpretation of historic interiors.[31]

While the other grant programs listed here support only non-profit organizations and government agencies, Favrot and Mitchell are unusual in that they expand eligibility to individuals and for-profit entities when a National Historic Landmark is involved. In general, private and for-profit National Historic Landmarks lack the financial support available to their non-profit or publicly owned counterparts. (See **Chapter 5** on the New Century Guild for an example of a National Historic Landmark without non-profit status.) The exceptions are the two National Trust funds and the tax incentives discussed below.

The National Park Service administers, through its regional offices, the Challenge Cost Share Program which provides support to threatened National Historic Landmarks. The proposed project must focus on reducing or eliminating the threat to a National Historic Landmark (or to address critical issues for the benefit of other National Historic Landmarks) and include an educational component.[32]

At the state level, State Historic Preservation Offices and statewide preservation organizations often make grants available to historical resources in their states. Sometimes funding is limited to historic properties that have secured some level of designation, but not always. The State Historic Preservation Office in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, administers several such grant funds, none of which targets National Historic Landmarks exclusively. Although Pennsylvania's National Historic

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[31] National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Grants and Loans from the National Trust for Historic Preservation* <http://www.nthp.org/help/grants.html> (25 February 2002).
[32] William C. Bolger, interview by author, Philadelphia, 7 February 2002.

Landmarks must compete with all National Register properties in the state (at least) for these grants, National Historic Landmark designation may help those applications stand out from the rest.

One example, Keystone Historic Preservation Grants are awarded for the preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation of historic resources. The property for which funds are requested must be located in Pennsylvania, listed in or eligible for the National Register, and be open and accessible to the public on a regular basis.[33] A second example, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Historic Preservation Grants are not limited to National Historic Landmarks or National Register properties. These grants are available for projects that identify, preserve, promote, and protect Pennsylvania's historic resources for the benefit of the public. Grant assistance is available for planning and development efforts (e.g., historic structure reports, feasibility studies, and preservation plans) and for educational and interpretive programs that promote awareness of preservation issues and enable communities to preserve their historic resources.[34]

In addition, Preservation Pennsylvania, a statewide preservation organization, targets funding to threatened historic resources in the City of Philadelphia, again not limiting support to National Historic Landmarks. The Philadelphia Intervention Fund provides support to make emergency structural repairs to save a property or to conduct feasibility studies and economic analyses, prepare historic structure reports, or obtain legal assistance for an endangered resource.[35]

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[33] Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, "Grants," *PHMC Grants Website.* <http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html> (22 February 2002).
[34] Ibid.
[35] Preservation Pennsylvania, "Philadelphia Intervention Fund" *Preservation Pennsylvania Funding* <http://www.preservationpa.org/03PIF.htm> (22 February 2002).

Other grants are available to Pennsylvania institutions for collections management, organizational capacity buildings, local history projects, and other preservation related efforts through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Preservation Pennsylvania, other state organizations and agencies such as the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, as well as major private foundations such the Pew Charitable Trusts and the William Penn Foundation.

While these funders are all important because they target financial support to historic resources – and sometimes directly target National Historic Landmarks – the total amount of funds available is not great relative to the number of eligible sites and the magnitude of their needs. For example, the Save America's Treasures Program committed over $13 million to National Historic Landmarks in 2001. That year, however, the program made grants to only fifty-five of the approximately 2,340 National Historic Landmarks. Those grants averaged only $249,000 each. As for the Getty, of the thirteen architectural conservation grants made in 2001, only four were to National Historic Landmarks in the United States, and each was a maximum of $250,000. These represent the largest grants available by far, as the others described above are all under $100,000 each. Both the Getty and Save America's Treasures, as well as many of the other funders, require grantees to raise addition funding as a match before the grants can be released. This can be a helpful challenge to use in other fundraising appeals, but it can also present a substantial burden to raise additional financial support. Despite the relatively small amounts of funding available from individual sources, in the cases of the Getty and Save America's Treasures, the prestige value associated with these programs is equal to or greater than the actual value of the grants themselves.

Loans

Through the Community Partners Program, the National Trust administers several loan programs. One, the National Preservation Loan Fund, supports tax-exempt, non-profit organizations and local governments in acquiring, stabilizing, rehabilitating, or restoring properties that are local, state, or nationally designated historic resources; contributing resources in certified local, state, or National Register historic districts; or resources eligible for listing in local, state, or national historic districts. Among the types of projects eligible for loans, the guidelines specify the preservation of National Historic Landmarks.[36]

Tax Incentives

For over two decades, the Internal Revenue Code has contained incentives to encourage capital investments in income-producing historic buildings and the revitalization of historic communities.[37] The Tax Reform Act of 1986 includes the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit which permits owners of certified historic structures (i.e., properties listed in a local or state register or in the National Register of Historic Places) to take a twenty percent income tax credit on the cost of rehabilitating their buildings for profit-making uses, including industrial, commercial, or rental residential. The law also permits depreciation of such improvements over 27.5 years for rental residential properties and over 31.5 years for non-residential properties.[38] In Philadelphia, owners of several National Historic Landmarks have recently taken advantage of the tax credit, including the

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[36] National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Community Partners National Trust Loan Funds." *Community Partners at National Trust for Historic Preservation* <http://www/nthp.org/community_partners/loans> (25 February 2002).
[37] A. Sayer Hutchinson, "Federal Investment Tax Credit," in *Preserving Your National Historic Landmark*, 81.
[38] National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services, "Federal Rehabilitation Tax Incentives," *Tax Act, National Park Service* <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/brochure1.htm> (22 February 2002).

PSFS Building, Reading Terminal, and the John Wanamaker Store.

In addition, a tax-paying individual or entity who donates a certified historic structure to a government agency or another appropriate recipient (e.g., a non-profit preservation organization) for historic preservation purposes may be eligible for a charitable contribution deduction from Federal income tax for the value of the property. The charitable contribution deduction may be taken on a property that is either listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register. Donations of partial interests in such properties, called façade easements or conservation easements, are also deductible. Such an easement is transferred with the property in perpetuity, meaning that the current and all future owners commit to maintaining the exterior of the building and relinquish the right to make certain changes to it.[39] Easements can be controversial, unattractive to potential buyers, and complicated to implement for property owners. One expert says, "Where it really makes sense is if, in your heart, you really want to preserve that property. If you don't, it's probably not worth the headaches in the end ... The tax deduction is really just a little bit of an extra incentive."[40]

For property owners who are eligible for these and other credits and deductions and are committed to the preservation of their property, however, significant benefits can be realized with the ability to combine various Federal, state, and local incentives for the maximum financial effect.

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[39] National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services, "Historic Preservation Easements," *Easements, National Park Service* <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/easement.htm> (22 February 2002).
[40] Lane Ittleson, "Preservation Easements," in *Preserving Your National Historic Landmark*, 89.

National Park Service: Technical and Professional Support

The most significant national source of technical and professional support for National Historic Landmarks is the National Historic Landmarks Assistance Initiative. Through this initiative, the National Park Service both works alone and partners with other Federal agencies, state and local governments, institutions of higher education, private organizations and individuals, and non-profit organizations (e.g., the National Trust for Historic Preservation) to ensure the long-term preservation of these historic resources. It provides a range of assistance, information, and services to owners and stewards of National Historic Landmarks, including site visits by National Park Service staff, condition assessment reports, technical publications and guides, newsletters, workshops and conferences, and online information, resources, and forums for communication. In addition, the National Historic Landmarks Assistance Initiative strives to educate the public about the importance of National Historic Landmarks and to assist in and build support for their protection and preservation.[41]

Recently, the first membership organization of stewards directly responsible for the care of National Historic Landmarks was founded to stimulate additional awareness and support for these resources. The National Historic Landmark Stewards Association was created out of the successful National Historic Landmark Stewards Congress of 1997, a forum that brought together owners, managers, and friends of National Historic Landmarks from across the country and drew attention to shared interests and needs. Among the goals of the Congress were to familiarize stewards with the network of agencies and organizations

[41] de Teel Patterson Tiller, "Preserving Our National Heritage: The National Historic Landmarks Assistance Initiative," *CRM* 20, no. 9 (1997): 3-4. Susan Escherich, "The National Historic Landmarks Assistance Initiative," *CRM* 20, no. 9 (1997): 11-12.

that can help in the preservation and interpretation of their properties; to explore possible solutions for meeting common needs; to serve as a forum in which stewards could collaborate and learn from each other; and to provide a unified voice for stewards.[42] As a way to implement these goals – in particular to meet the widespread needs for increased financial and technical assistance and for improved public education about landmarks – the National Historic Landmark Stewards Association was formed "to preserve, promote, protect and pay for" National Historic Landmarks.[43] Although the Association only had its first meeting in 2000, many are optimistic and enthusiastic about the potential of this new organization to enhance the protection, management, and stewardship of the nation's most significant historic resources.

[42] Lisa Kolakowsky Smith, "National Historic Landmark Stewards Association," *CRM* 24, no. 2 (2002): 21-22
[43] Smith, "National Historic Landmark Stewards Association," 21.

	ELIGIBILITY	ACTIVITIES	AMOUNT
INTERNATIONAL			
J. Paul Getty Trust Architectural Conservation Grants	▪ Nonprofit, charitable or tax-exempt organizations ▪ Building must be owned by organization that is committed to long-term preservation and maintenance ▪ Building must be accessible to or used for the benefit of the public ▪ Building must possess the highest available governmental listing of significance available in the country (e.g., National Historic Landmark)	Projects that focus on the historic structure and fabric and address conservation issues related to the building's setting ▪ Research, documentation, and analysis to develop a comprehensive conservation plan ▪ Conservation of an historic structure or fabric of a building or site	Matching grants: up to $75,000 (planning) or up to $250,000 (implementation)
NATIONAL/FEDERAL			
Save America's Treasures Grants (National Park Service/National Endowment for the Arts)	▪ Non-profit, tax-exempt organizations ▪ State/local government agencies ▪ Indian Tribes ▪ Certain federal agencies ▪ Threatened property must be nationally significant (e.g., NHL) and open to the public	▪ Preservation/conservation work ▪ Grantee must assume cost of continued maintenance, repair, and administration of the property to preserve the historical integrity of features, materials, appearance, workmanship, and setting that made it eligible for the National Register.	Matching Grants: $250,000-$1,000,000 (although the recent average appears to be approximately $249,000 for each grant)
Preservation Services Fund (National Trust for Historic Preservation)	▪ Non-profit organizations ▪ Local government agencies	▪ Preservation planning ▪ Professional consultation (e.g., architecture, fundraising, organizational development, law) ▪ Public education efforts	Matching Grants: $500-$5,000

Table 2. Overview of financial support for which National Historic Landmarks in Philadelphia may be eligible.

	ELIGIBILITY	ACTIVITIES	AMOUNT
NATIONAL/FEDERAL (cont'd)			
The Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation (National Trust for Historic Preservation)	▪ Non-profit organizations ▪ Local government agencies ▪ Individuals and for-profits if an NHL is involved	Projects that preserve "an authentic sense of place": ▪ Professional consultation ▪ Conferences and workshops ▪ Educational programs	Outright Grants: $2,500-$10,000
The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors (National Trust for Historic Preservation)	▪ Non-profit organizations ▪ Local government agencies ▪ Individuals and for-profits if an NHL is involved	Preservation, restoration, and interpretation of historic interiors: ▪ Professional consultation ▪ Print/video materials ▪ Educational programs	Outright Grants: $2,500-$10,000
Community Partners - National Preservation Loan Fund (National Trust for Historic Preservation)	▪ Tax-exempt, non-profit organizations ▪ Local government agencies ▪ Project must involve a locally-, state-, or nationally-designated resources; a contributing resource in a local, state or national historic district; or a resource eligible for listing on a local, state, or national register	▪ Stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration projects that meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards ▪ Preservation of National Historic Landmarks	1-3 Year Loans: $50,000-$350,000
Federal Rehabilitation Tax-Credit (National Park Service/ Pennsylvania Bureau for Historic Preservation)	▪ Owners of income-producing properties on the National Register (individually or as contributing in a district) or listed as contributing to a Local Certified District. ▪ Owner must operate building as income producing property for min. 5 years after rehabilitation.	▪ Rehabilitation work undertaken according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. ▪ The project must be a "substantial rehabilitation" – the cost of the rehabilitation is greater that the adjusted basis of the building or at least $5,000.	Tax credit: 20%

Table 2. Overview of financial support for which National Historic Landmarks in Philadelphia may be eligible. (cont'd)

	ELIGIBILITY	ACTIVITIES	AMOUNT
REGIONAL			
Challenge Cost Share Program (National Park Service, Northeast Region)	▪ Non-profit organizations ▪ Government agencies ▪ Project must involve National Historic Landmark	▪ Reduction/elimination of a threat to a National Historic Landmark ▪ Project that addresses a critical issue for the benefit of NHLs. ▪ Project must include educational component	Matching Grants: $3,000-$30,000
STATE			
Keystone Historic Preservation Grants (Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission)	▪ Non-profit, incorporated, tax-exempt organizations ▪ Local government agencies ▪ Applicant must be in existence for at least 5 years prior ▪ Project must involve a property listed in (or eligible for) the National Register or contributing in a National Register Historic District ▪ Property must be accessible to the public on a regular basis ▪ Property must be located in PA	▪ Preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation projects that meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.	Matching Grants: $5,000-$100,000
Pennsylvania historical and museum commission Historic Preservation Grants (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission)	▪ Pennsylvania non-profit, incorporated, tax-exempt organizations ▪ Local government agencies ▪ Applicant must be in existence for at least 2 years prior	Projects that directly identify, preserve, promote, and protect PA's historic resources for the benefit of the public: ▪ Cultural resource surveys ▪ Planning & development (historic structure reports, feasibility studies, paint analyses, preservation plans) ▪ Educational/interpretive programs	Outright Grants: up to $5,000 Matching grants: $5,001-$15,000

Table 2. Overview of financial support for which National Historic Landmarks in Philadelphia may be eligible. (cont'd)

	ELIGIBILITY	ACTIVITIES	AMOUNT
LOCAL			
Philadelphia Intervention Fund (Preservation Pennsylvania)	▪ Non-profit, incorporated organizations ▪ Local government agencies ▪ Project must involve an endangered site in Philadelphia	▪ Economic analyses ▪ Historic structure reports ▪ Emergency structural repairs or restorations ▪ Feasibility studies ▪ Legal assistance	Outright Grants: $1,000-$20,000

Table 2. Overview of financial support for which National Historic Landmarks in Philadelphia may be eligible. (cont'd)

4. Eastern State Penitentiary

Designated in 1965, Eastern State Penitentiary at Twenty-First Street and Fairmount Avenue was one of the first National Historic Landmarks. (See **Figure 2.**) Numerous sources agree that Eastern State, built between 1823 and 1836 is the most influential work of architecture in Philadelphia and the most important prison in the America.[44] After approximately 140 years in operation, the Penitentiary closed in 1970 – five years after designation – outmoded as a prison facility and in great need of structural repairs. For a while, this National Historic Landmark was endangered by a variety of interrelated threats: neglect, physical deterioration, inappropriate reuse, demolition, and the most devastating, lack of awareness of and support for the history and potential of the nationally significant site.

If Eastern State is one of the earliest National Historic Landmarks and the most important building architecturally in the city, how could its historical value be ignored in favor of real estate development? Preservationists and other interested parties ultimately made that argument successfully. Advocates convinced the city to open the site to the public and interpret it to educate the public about life at Eastern State, its role in exporting architectural and penal reform ideas to the world, and the history of the prison system in

[44] William C. Bolger, "Endangered Landmarks," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 18 December 1988. Thomas Hine, "How to Avoid Present Fiascoes When Developing Eastern State," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 November 1987. Also see Norman Johnston quoted in Michael Vitez, "Group Hopes to Unlock History at Fairmount Penitentiary: The 1820s Prison Influenced Cell Designs Worldwide. A Coalition Wants It Restored as a Tourist Attraction," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 4 December 1993; and David Brownlee quoted in Paula Fuchsberg, "A Prisoner's-Eye View of the Old Eastern State Pen this Mysterious Hulk of a Prison in Fairmount, So Long Vacant, is Being Opened for Tours," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 30 September 1988.

the United States. Today, it is one of the most intriguing tourist attractions in the city and enjoys broad-based support from community members, private funders, political leaders, the local cultural community, prison experts, historians, preservationists, and others. Despite its National Historic Landmark status and recent successes as a interpreted site, however, Eastern State is still threatened by severe deterioration and has been included in the Section 8 Report to Congress, the World Monuments Watch, and Pennsylvania At Risk as a severely endangered resource.

A Forced Monastery, A Machine for Reform

Eastern State Penitentiary was the embodiment of a reform movement that began in Philadelphia in 1787. Members of The Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons expressed growing concern over poor conditions in prisons of the day. They developed a radical concept for a prison, a "penitentiary," designed not merely to punish, but to inspire spiritual reflection through which criminals would be rehabilitated. The method was a Quaker-inspired system (later termed the Pennsylvania System) that isolated inmates from each other in the belief that criminals, left to silent contemplation on the ugliness of their deeds, would become genuinely regretful of their crimes.[45]

The architect of Eastern State, John Haviland, wrote of the Penitentiary as "a forced monastery, a machine for reform."[46] He designed the revolutionary radiating, hub-and-spoke plan in which each prisoner lived and worked in confined alone within a private eight-by-twelve foot cell. (See **Figure 3**.) Each vaulted cell had a skylight; the engineering

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[45] Eastern State Penitentiary, *ESP:History:Six Page History*, <http://www.easternstate.org/history/sixpage.html> (4 March 2002).
[46] Ibid.

advancements of running water, a flush toilet, and central heat; and a private yard. There, the inmate had "only the light from heaven, the word of God (the Bible) and honest work (shoemaking, weaving, and the like) to lead to penitence."[47] Seven cellblocks, long corridors lined with cells, radiated from a central surveillance rotunda which allowed prison guards to keep all inmates under continuous and simultaneous watch. (See **Figure 4**.) The complex was then enclosed within fortress-like exterior walls of granite, thirty feet high and twelve feet thick, with one gated opening and three guard towers.

When it opened in 1829, Eastern State Penitentiary was the largest and most expensive building in America and quickly became the most famous prison in the world. The Penitentiary, and the philosophy it expressed, influenced prison reform for over a century and served as the model for hundreds of prisons around the world.[48]

The effectiveness and compassion of the Pennsylvania System soon became a matter of much debate when it was recognized that the method upon which it was based – strict solitary confinement – drove inmates insane. Despite being a model of reform, Eastern State was guilty of cruel punishments, harsh mistreatments, and unsatisfactory health and sanitary conditions. The system of solitary confinement, never entirely implemented at the Penitentiary, eroded over the decades, until the Pennsylvania System at Eastern State was finally repealed by law in 1913.[49] Through these years, more cellblocks were added within the prison complex to increase space for the growing prison population and to meet the needs of modern prison operations. These later additions no longer

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[47] Ibid.
[48] William Ecenbarger, "Whispers from the Wall: Eastern State Penitentiary Was Built as a Model for Prison Reform. It Turned Out to be a Dreadful Mistake," *Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine*, 9 May 1993.
[49] Ibid.

followed the Pennsylvania System, abandoning the form and intent of Haviland's original hub-and-spoke plan for the complex.

Political Support: Making the Case Against Redevelopment

Eastern State was badly outdated and in need of substantial repair when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania closed the facility in 1970. Three years later, the City of Philadelphia purchased the site with intentions of development. In the years that followed, Eastern State was left deserted and decaying. The old prison would have been expensive to demolish entirely, but no one had a clear plan for its renewal. What had once been the most well-known and influential prison complex in the world – and then one of the earliest designated National Historic Landmarks – became the biggest white elephant in Philadelphia. In this first case study, the harshest reality of National Historic Landmark status is evident: National Historic Landmarks are not inherently immune to threats. They can be inadequately maintained, disconnected from their historic use, abandoned, left to decay and vandalism, adapted to unsuitable purposes, and even demolished.

In this phase of its history, Eastern State was endangered not only by neglect, but also by inappropriate proposals for reuse (e.g., a theme park, a shopping center, housing for the elderly, a mini-industrial park, a Middle Eastern bazaar, and luxury apartments).[50] In a 1987 column, Thomas Hine, former architecture critic for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, advised, "This great and frightening city-owned edifice should be regarded not as a development site the sale of which can help balance the city budget but as an opportunity for enriching life in

[50] Kenneth Finkel, "The Penitentiary Should Be Preserved," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 24 May 1987.

the region."[51] The city had other ideas. At the time, the Redevelopment Authority was considering proposals to demolish the cellblocks and construct a retail shopping complex within the former prison's exterior walls.

The selection of a developer seemed imminent when Mayor W. Wilson Goode consented to a meeting with members of select community groups and the Eastern State Penitentiary Task Force, a grass-roots interest group of neighbors, architectural historians, architects, preservationists, museum experts, criminologists, and penologists who advocated a preservation-minded approach to the site. The Mayor challenged them to make the case for halting redevelopment of the prison. Ken Finkel, former Chair of the Task Force, described the success of the group's petitioning:

> ... while we knew our arguments to preserve the penitentiary were convincing, we really didn't expect to be heard. After all, we reasoned, this is the 1980s: Money talks and history walks. But after meeting with the preservationists, the mayor decided to save the penitentiary, recommending that all of the developers' proposals be rejected. "This historical site must be preserved," Goode wrote in a letter to the Redevelopment Authority. It was a surprising turnaround.[52]

Eastern State had an ally in City Council as well. Although John Street, President of City Council at the time, never disclosed the exact reasons for his opposition to the reuse proposals, some believe he understood the significance of the site – that it was the most important building architecturally in the city because it exported ideas about design and prison reform around the world, and it was in his district.[53] For any redevelopment plan to proceed, Street would have had to introduce legislation to the City Council. If the Mayor

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[51] Hine, "How to Avoid Present Fiascoes."
[52] Kenneth Finkel, "Eastern State Controversy: Where is the Voice of Philadelphia's Cultural Folk?" *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 24 May 1988.
[53] Bolger, interview, 28 February 2002. Sally Elk, interview by author, Philadelphia, 15 March 2002. Kenneth Finkel, interview by author, Philadelphia, 8 March 2002.

had not stopped the process, Street probably would have blocked it himself.[54] Eastern State had been saved from its immediate threats, but the question remained of what to do with it.

Decay is Interesting: Interpretation as a Museum and a Ruin

In what was called "a promising model for landmark management," the Philadelphia Historical Commission was charged with conducting a study of the Eastern State Penitentiary site to assess its value and potential, "not as 10 acres of developable real estate encumbered by old buildings, but as a great international monument."[55] The reports from this and other studies concluded that the highest and best use for the site (with the knowledge that the economic feasibility of any commercial conversion depended on the demolition of at least part of the complex) was as a monument and a museum open to the public, rather than mere real estate.[56] The approach taken at Eastern State followed this recommendation. It has been opened as a tourist attraction and interpreted to tell about prison life at the Penitentiary and Eastern State's worldwide influence, as well as to explore broader issues related to the U.S. prison system. The public can tour the complex and see installations and exhibitions in the buildings. It has been left partly as a ruin, stabilized to some degree but not restored, because "decay is interesting" to visitors and helps to convey the history and emotion of the site.[57]

The city has retained ownership of the property, but Eastern State has been operated by organizations with not-for-profit, charitable status for over a decade. The first

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[54] Elk, interview.
[55] Bolger, "Endangered Landmarks."
[56] Elk, interview.
[57] Ibid.

steward was the Eastern State Penitentiary Task Force of The Preservation Coalition of Greater Philadelphia (now The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia); then The Pennsylvania Prison Society (coincidentally the former Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons which had conceived the idea for Eastern State over two centuries earlier); and as of 2001, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc. These organizations have made it possible to obtain grants and other donations for the management, preservation, and programming of the Penitentiary site. In particular, the site's National Historic Landmark status was important in securing its first grant, from the Pew Charitable Trusts, for a comprehensive study that addressed issues of reuse, structural conditions, management, marketing, and interpretation.[58] (See **Chapter 6** on the Wagner Free Institute of Science case study for further illustration of how the validation of National Historic Landmark designation can help secure funding even from sources that do not limit or explicitly give preference to such applicants.)

Eastern State has also received grants specifically because of its National Historic Landmark designation. It was awarded a planning grant from the J. Paul Getty Trust for completion of an historic structures report and plans to approach the Getty again soon for a major conservation grant. In addition, the site recently received funding in support of roof work from the Save America's Treasures program. As discussed in **Chapter 3**, the Getty and Save America's Treasures are the only two funders at the national level that target their support directly to National Historic Landmarks.

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[58] Ibid.

Unique in these case studies, designation as a National Historic Landmark has been a means of raising awareness of the threats to the Eastern State site. The Penitentiary has been included in the Section 8 Report to Congress on threatened National Historic Landmarks every year since at least 1988. A Priority One site, Eastern State is highlighted as being in immediate danger of severe loss of integrity. The danger for Eastern State is physical deterioration which requires stabilization to prevent further damage and save the site from destruction.[59] In addition, Eastern State has been included on the World Monuments Watch List of 100 Most Endangered Sites. The World Monuments Watch works to call attention to threatened cultural heritage sites around the world and directs financial support to their preservation.[60] Although inclusion on these lists is not a positive indicator of a resource's condition, in the case of Eastern State these distinctions have helped greatly to generate interest in and support for saving the site on the part of the general public, government officials, and private funders.

National Historic Landmark designation can serve as proof of a resource's importance, and that proof can help make a persuasive argument for a variety of types of support. While Eastern State Penitentiary's status as a National Historic Landmark probably played some part, whether explicit or implicit, in convincing the city leadership to block redevelopment and save the site, designation directly helped to raising awareness and money to protect, study, interpret, and use the former prison. In the end however, Eastern State Penitentiary is partly a cautionary tale for National Historic Landmarks. In contrast to

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[59] "Eastern State Penitentiary," entry in the National Park Service's *National Historic Landmarks Database* <http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/> (6 March 2002).
[60] World Monuments Fund, *World Monuments Fund: About World Monuments Fund.* <http://www.wmf.org/htm/programs/aboutwmf.html> (25 February 2002).

the other case studies, the size, complexity, condition, and use-specific design of the Eastern State complex present challenges that may ultimately be insurmountable. National Historic Landmark status may help to save a threatened resource such as Eastern State, but designation is not enough unless a convincing preservation case can be made, a compelling and appropriate use can be found, and adequate support can be raised to repair, maintain, manage, and program the site.

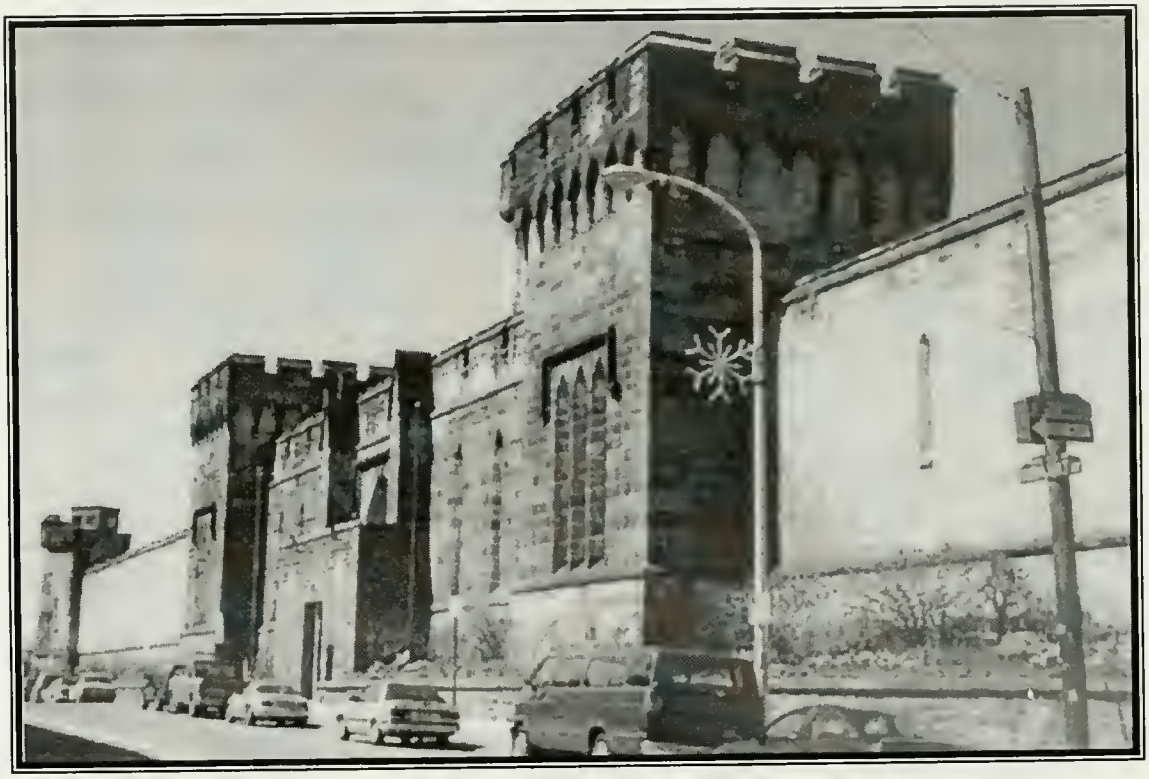

Figure 2. Eastern State Penitentiary. Exterior, Fairmount Avenue façade showing main entrance and guard towers. (Photograph by author, 2002.)

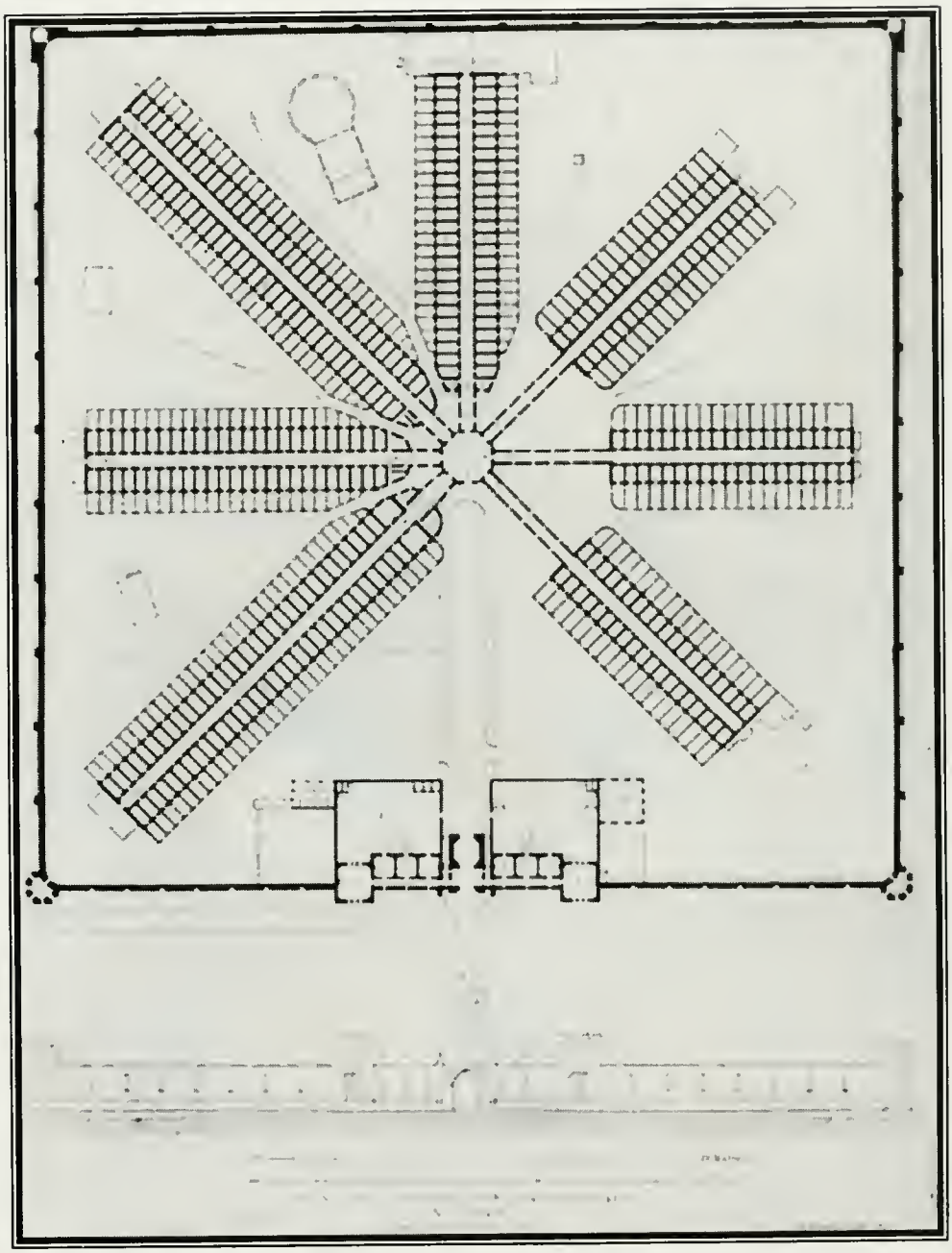

Figure 3. Eastern State Penitentiary. Plan showing Haviland's radial, hub-and-spoke design. Engraving originally from Frédéric-Auguste Demetz and Guillaume-Abel Blouet, *Rapports sur les pénitenciers des Etats-Unis* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1837). (Image from Norman Johnson, *Eastern State Penitentiary: Crucible of Good Intentions.*)

Figure 4. Eastern State Penitentiary. Interior, cellblock nine corridor, 1890s. Photograph originally from Michael J. Cassidy, *Warden Cassidy on Prisons and Convicts* (Philadelphia: Patterson and White, 1897). (Image from Norman Johnson, *Eastern State Penitentiary: Crucible of Good Intentions.*)

5. The New Century Guild

The building at 1307 Locust Street is an otherwise unremarkable Philadelphia row house that was identified and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1993 because of its significance in women's history in America, specifically as the home of the New Century Guild. (See **Figure 5**.) This organization still exists and occupies the same location today; the continued use of the resource was an important part of its designation. Despite the site's distinction as a National Historic Landmark, however, few people are aware of its significance. In addition, despite the Guild's history as an important service-providing institution, its membership has dwindled, it no longer provides programs to fulfill its mission, and its health as an organization is questionable. Until recently, its National Historic Landmark designation has had little, if any, impact. Although the Guild is nationally significant and survived to see another new century, its future as an institution and its ability to maintain its building were uncertain. Fortunately, within the past year the New Century Guild has taken the first steps toward revitalizing itself as an organization, using its National Historic Landmark designation as its guide. In this second case study, the Guild's historic significance as articulated through designation, as well as its goals as outlined in the original mission and by-laws of the organization, is serving as the foundation on which the organization is developing new strategies to preserve itself as an institution and a site with renewed significance in the ongoing story of women's history.

Giving Working Women a Chance

Founded in 1882 by Eliza Turner (a nationally recognized writer and reformer committed to the women's, labor, and abolitionist movements), the New Century Guild was organized by upper class women, members of the elite New Century Club, to address directly the needs of self-supporting women entering the workforce. One of the earliest, largest, and most successful of such organizations in the country, the New Century Guild aspired to "give young working women a CHANCE: to help those who are at work all day, and whose means are small, to those advantages which women of more leisure and means are finding in their Clubs; more expensive Clubs."[61] From the beginning, membership in the Guild was open to "[a]ny self-supporting woman, from whatever department of industry, business or profession, and women interested in advancing the purposes of the organization."[62] The formation of the Guild was bold at a time when the popular belief was that respectable women would not work for pay outside the home.[63]

In 1906, the Guild purchased and moved into the house on Locust Street, the first property it owned, where it worked to improve conditions for all working women and provided a range of comprehensive services for young business and professional women in the city. Its offerings included evening classes for personal enrichment; work skills training; lectures and performances; a library; a women's newspaper; meals; guest rooms; a health

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[61] *Report to the Executive Board, New Century Guild of Working Women, 1894*, New Century Guild, Trust, and Company Papers, Philadelphia Clubs and Companies Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. (This collection is hereafter cited as New Century Papers.)
[62] *The New Century Guild: An Organization of Members of The New Century Trust – Origin, Charter, By-Laws*, New Century Papers.
[63] Page Putnam Miller and Jill S. Mesirow, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: New Century Guild* (Washington, DC: National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1993), 8.9 & 8.14.

insurance plan; and a supportive and safe place to gather and socialize. (See **Figure 6.**) In the words of its founder, the Guild strove to provide its members with:

> ... chances for study and for technical training which will make our girls more skilled and intelligent workers; help to right ways of thinking which make them self-respecting women; education of taste in recreation which brings a distaste for injurious amusement; resources for social intercourse, which are not always to be had in lodging and boarding houses; organization which constantly brings our younger members into association with older and more experienced women, whose friendship can surround them and support them in times of trial and temptation; chances for making life-long associations, such as boys find at school and college; sense of upbearing which comes to so many lonely lives when they find themselves in contact with others who think and feel as they do; source of real strength to each which supports each member of a worthy organization.[64]

While the Guild was representative of a larger nationwide movement, it was unique in providing a comprehensive array of services most other organizations offered in part.[65]

Over its history, the New Century Guild's services and activities evolved in response to changing conditions. For example, the Guild discontinued its classes in various trades when such training programs were offered at Drexel Institute (now Drexel University) and through the Philadelphia public school system.[66] In addition, as its members were increasingly able to secure medical care insurance through their employers, the Guild no longer provided its health plan, although funds for emergencies were still available.[67] In the decades following the Second World War, however, the Guild's membership base declined and it eventually ceased entirely its programs for working women.[68] The organization that had been a model for activitism, advocacy, and the provision of direct services for women

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[64] Eliza S. Turner quoted in *Report to the Executive Board, 1894*, New Century Papers.
[65] Miller and Mesirow, 8.9.
[66] *100th Anniversary, 1882-1982: The New Century Guild*, New Century Papers.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Bolger, interview, 28 February 2002.

in the labor force became and remains a private, social club for its small group of aging members.

Organizational Challenges and Effects on Integrity

The evolution of the New Century Guild, unfortunate in a general way, is particularly troubling when the significance of the Guild building is considered. What does the state of the Guild organization mean to the Guild site? How do the profound changes to the Guild's historic purpose and activities affect the significance and integrity of the resource when the building's continued use by the organization was central to its National Historic Landmark designation? The threat to this National Historic Landmark, at least in the short term, is not physical, but rather the potential severance of the long connection between the building and the organization. It is plausible that the New Century Guild would be less evocative as a National Historic Landmark if the Guild organization, even in its present state, ceased to exist.

The New Century Guild as an organization appears to have suffered in the following three interrelated ways: (1) membership has declined, (2) the organization has deviated from its mission, and (3) it lacks programming. In addition, despite the Guild's apparent pride in its history and building, it has neither interpreted and documented the site nor made itself accessible to the public. It is a National Historic Landmark with a story to tell, but it fails to tell it.

When the Guild moved to the Locust Street house in 1906, it was one thousand members strong. As late as the 1930s, membership totaled nearly nine hundred and the Guild was thriving. As of its 1993 National Historic Landmark designation, however, the

Guild was down to two hundred members.[69] In 2001, only about eighty of the approximately 150 members on the books could be contacted by phone.[70] For decades, the Guild has been unable to attract many new members – in particular, few, if any, younger members. As the members individually are becoming more elderly, the membership as a group is aging. Without renewal with new and younger members, membership will continue to decrease until eventually the continued operation of the Guild become pointless.

Until 1970, the New Century Trust[71] was a non-profit, tax-exempt, charitable entity. In that year, the Internal Revenue Service revoked its 501(c)(3) status. According to Guild leadership, the IRS declared that the Guild did not have the prerogative to maintain itself as a private club while it enjoyed tax-exempt status as a charitable educational and social service organization, and its charitable status was rescinded.[72] More importantly, in using its funds to support itself as a private club instead of providing mission-directed services (i.e., using charitable donations in ways other than how its donors intended), the Guild was also in danger of losing its endowment, its only substantial source of support. The IRS's decision was essentially official recognition that the mission of the organization was no longer what it claimed to be. Interestingly, rather than view this situation as an indicator of severe organizational problems, the Guild chose to continue as a private club without providing programming to fulfill its stated mission.[73]

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[69] Miller and Mesirow, 8.9.
[70] Bolger, interview, 28 February 2002.
[71] The New Century Trust owns and manages the New Century Guild's property and administers an endowment of which the New Century Guild is the beneficiary.
[72] Bolger, interview, 7 February 2002.
[73] Bolger, interview, 28 February 2002.

This situation continues to affect the New Century Guild today. Because the Guild property is neither owned nor managed by a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, it is not eligible for most of the financial benefits outlined in **Chapter 3**. Only the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund, administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, provides funding to for-profit entities directly involved with National Historic Landmarks.

Using Designation to Guide Renewal

The New Century Guild did not actively seek designation of its property as a National Historic Landmark. (Another case study, the Wagner Free Institute, did pursue its own designation.) Designation came to the Guild when it was identified and researched by the National Park Service as part of the theme study in women's history. Therefore, designation was not consciously pursued as a strategy for the organization and the site. Recently, however, its National Historic Landmark status has attracted the interest and attention of individuals who recognize the need of major organizational change to preserve the Guild as an organization and a nationally significant resource.

With a change in leadership, the board and membership of the Guild have started the process of renewal. Designation has been instrumental in helping the Guild understand its value as an organization and a historic site; it serves to define the Guild's significance and represents validation from the Federal government of that significance. Reviewing the designation document and its mission and by-laws, the Guild realized that its stated purpose

is still valid. It has reconfirmed that mission and committed itself to providing services and programs to address problems of working women today.[74]

The Guild established the following three goals for itself: (1) to develop mission-related programs; (2) to work with like-minded organizations with complementary missions; and (3) to develop an historic site interpretation program. The challenge of reinvigorating its membership remains however. It is around its reclaimed mission and significance, new programming and volunteer opportunities, and new partnerships with social service providers that the Guild intends to redefine and rebuild its "identity group" (i.e., its members and constituents). Renewed as a beneficial organization, the Guild is also seeking to regain its non-profit status which will enable it to secure grants to support its programs. In addition, by returning to its original purpose, the Guild will also retain its endowment which will continue to fund, among other needs, the repair and maintenance of its building.

Important in its plans is the Guild's goal of opening its doors to the public and interpreting its building to communicate the history of organization, of the building, and of women in the labor force. The continued association of the New Century Guild with its site is the key to its extraordinary significance and degree of integrity and to its designation as a National Historic Landmark. Although a seemingly anonymous site, the New Century Guild building is one where important events occurred and may continue to occur. The site has the potential for a broader, less static means of interpretation. It can become a "landmark in time,"[75] one that speaks of the past and brings the past into the present through both the services and the interpretive programming it provides.

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Bolger, interview, 7 February 2002.

Although National Historic Landmark designation has not been the sole motivation for this renewed outlook at the New Century Guild, it is clearly being used as a catalyst and a tool for the planning process and as a focus for new activities. As the Guild successfully addresses its most immediate needs and can begin to implement service and education programs, it will be in a position to continue to leverage its status as a National Historic Landmark. Depending on the effectiveness of its strategies, the New Century Guild can serve as a model for other small National Historic Landmarks with strong associations of continued use of their properties.

Figure 5. The New Century Guild. Exterior, Locust Street façade. (Photograph by author, 2001.)

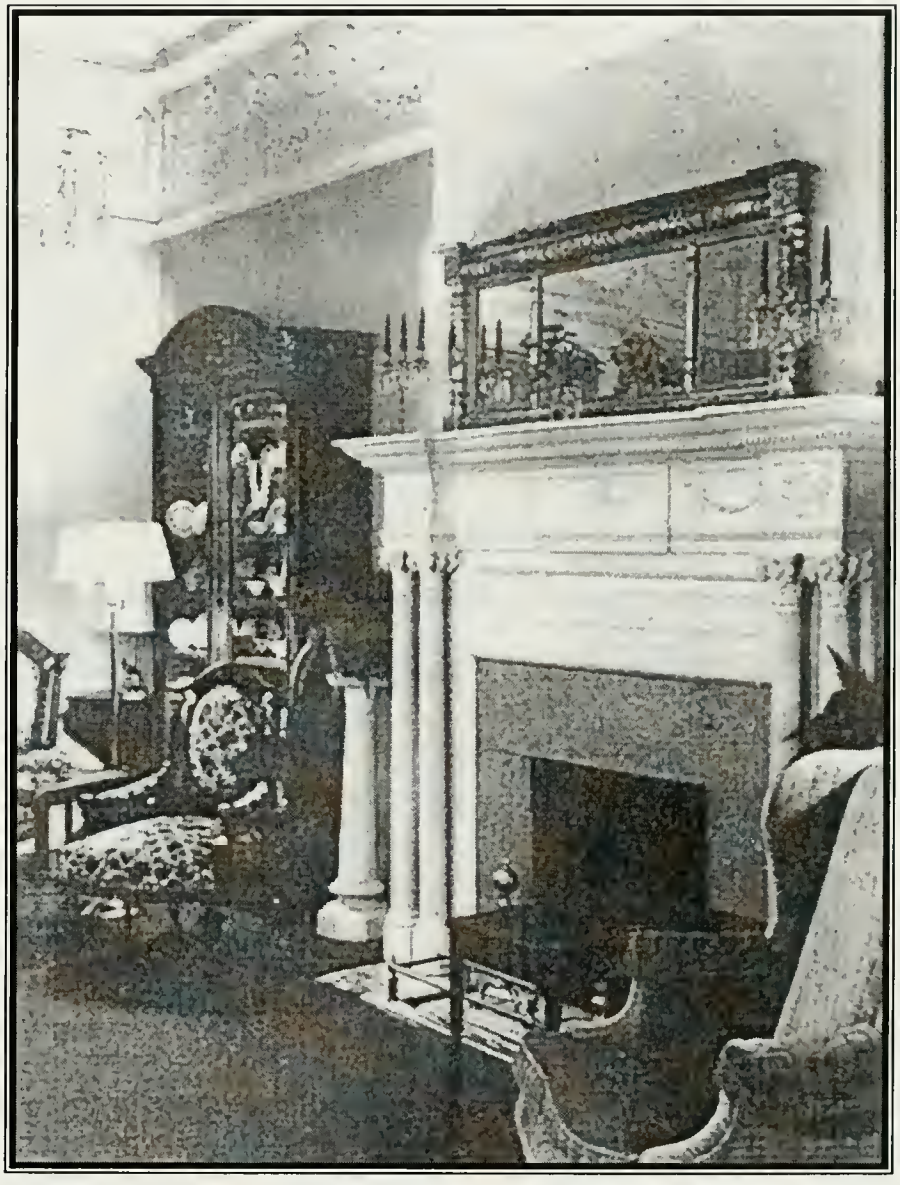

Figure 6. The New Century Guild. Interior, reception room. (Photograph from *100th Anniversary, 1882-1982: The New Century Guild*, New Century Guild Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.)

6. The Wagner Free Institute of Science

Like the New Century Guild (but unlike the massive, unmistakable Eastern State Penitentiary), the Wagner Free Institute of Science is something of a hidden treasure. Located in an unlikely area of North Philadelphia at Seventeenth Street and Montgomery Avenue, the Wagner has survived as an active scientific institution, maintaining its free programs of classes, its scientific collections and displays, and its public education mission since the nineteenth century. Despite its history as a provider of free science education, an important research institution, and an extensive repository of scientific specimens – in addition to its associations with individuals significant in fields of science, important scientific and educational theories and exhibition practices, and a prominent architect – the Wagner struggled for many years in anonymity, with little funds and lack of direction. In the 1980s, however, the Wagner actively pursue National Historic Landmark designation as part of an overall strategic plan to save the institution and the site. This final case study illustrates how a nationally significant historic resource can secure designation and leverage it successfully to reinterpret relevance, to effect positive organizational change, to make the case for preservation, and to raise money, awareness, and support.

A Remarkable Survivor from the Nineteenth Century

The Wagner Free Institute of Science was established in 1855 by William Wagner, a Philadelphia merchant, philanthropist, amateur scientist, and avid collector of natural

history specimens. A rare surviving example of a nineteenth century scientific society, the Institute remains nearly unchanged as an institution and as a building from its early years.

In 1865, the Wagner moved into its current building which was designed by architect John MacArthur, Jr. specifically for the Institute's use. (See **Figure 7.**) The building, containing an exhibition gallery, a lecture hall, a library, classrooms, and office, unites the Institute's functions of a natural history museum, a research institution, and a school.[76]

From its beginnings, the core of the Wagner's activities was the provision of free evening classes on current scientific research and theory taught by prominent scholars. While most scientific societies and academies of the time restricted their organized educational programs to a privileged few – typically upper-class men – the Wagner opened its doors and extended instruction to a wider public, regardless of income or social status.[77] Its offering of free public education courses on science is the oldest program devoted to free adult education in America.[78]

After William Wagner's death in 1885, Joseph Leidy, one of the leading figures in the natural sciences during the nineteenth century, was appointed to head the Wagner Free Institute. Under Leidy's leadership, the Wagner expanded its mission and programs, enlarged its collection of specimens and, most significantly, reorganized the Institute's

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[76] Susan Glassman and Eugene A. Bolt, Jr., "Wagner Free Institute of Science," in *Invisible Philadelphia: Community through Voluntary Organizations,* compiled and edited by Jean Barth Toll and Mildred S. Gillam (Philadelphia: Atwater Kent Museum, 1995), 817.

[77] Eugene Bolt and Susan Glassman, *National Historic Landmark Nomination Form: Wagner Free Institute of Science* (Washington, DC: National Historic Landmarks Survey, National Park Service, 1990), 8.4.

[78] Wagner Free Institute of Science, *The Wagner Free Institute of Science of Philadelphia: Annual Announcement of Lectures, Courses, and Programs for Session of 2001-02, One Hundred and Forty-Sixth Year* (Philadelphia: the Institute, 2001), 1.

museum.[79] The new systematic display, in line with the most advanced scientific ideas of the time, arranged the specimens in "a three dimensional display of Darwin's theory of evolution with the cases set up so that a walk around the museum is a trip through geological time."[80]

The exhibition hall, as well as other major interior spaces, and its display cases and collection remain virtually unaltered since this early reorganization. (See **Figure 8.**) In addition to the specimens, the Institute's collections include scientific journals and texts, William Wagner's personal library and correspondence, and archival materials related to the Institute. Today, the Wagner serves as a major resource for the study of the history of science, museums, and educational institutions of the middle and late nineteenth century."[81]

Like the New Century Guild, the Wagner Free Institute of Science is still in operation and continues to occupy its same building today. This survival is remarkable because, in the decades following the Civil War, scientific institutions such as the Wagner were gradually either absorbed by university programs or developed into specialized technical or trade institutions.[82] The New Century Guild was affected by a similar trend when its training courses were displaced by programs at Drexel University and in the Philadelphia public schools. Unlike the other case studies, however, the Wagner has preserved its original mission and activities, continues to use its building as it has historically, and has developed interpretative programming for its site to convey the history and significance of the Wagner Free Institute of Science, its building, its collections, and its

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[79] Ibid., 2.
[80] Glassman and Bolt, "Wagner Free Institute of Science," 818.
[81] Bolt and Glassman, *National Historic Landmark Nomination Form*, 7.4.
[82] Glassman and Bolt, "Wagner Free Institute of Science," 817.

programs in the development of science, education, and museums in nineteenth century America.

Seeking Designation as Part of a Strategic Plan

The Wagner Free Institute was placed in the National Register in 1989 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1990. In the years preceding its designation, the institution had been, as the current director described it, "winding down." Although it had retained its collections and continued to provide classes and lectures, it was struggling to operate on what little was left in its endowment.[83]

The Institute's high degree of integrity may be attributed to its lack of financial resources during its later history. Typically, science facilities and museums have continually altered their spaces and displays as science reinterpreted itself and as museums reinterpreted approaches to exhibitions.[84] Because resources were limited, the Wagner Free Institute stayed committed to its primary mission of public education, rather than allocating funds to research and museum functions. Thus, the Institute's building, collections, and displays remained intact.

In the years preceding designation, several bequests left to the Institute prompted the Board of Trustees to address the challenge of how to make the institution relevant when its funds were low, it was located in an apparently undesirable North Philadelphia neighborhood, and its identity seemed to be frozen in time.[85] In an approach similar to that adopted recently by the New Century Guild, the Institute embarked on a strategic planning

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[83] Susan Glassman, interview by author, Philadelphia, 7 February 2002.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.

process. The resulting recommendations included using the Institute's historical significance and mission to reinvigorate its purpose and activities and to raise awareness of and support for the institution. Today, the Institute continues to provide evening lectures and classes for adults and has established daytime programs for school classes, camps, and science clubs as well as museum lessons and tours of the site.

Not identified as part of a National Park Service theme study, the Wagner Free Institute actively pursued National Historic Landmark designation as a conscious strategy to gain recognition and attract funding. The designation process, in and of itself, helped the Institute to understand its own importance as a unique national resource. This, in turn, provided the focus for the Institute to reconsider its institutional vision and redefine itself based on its national significance in the history of public education, of science museums, and of science education in the nineteenth century and its association with nationally significant scientists and science discoveries.[86]

Embracing its historical significance as identified through the National Historic Landmark nomination process, the Wagner Free Institute developed a multi-layered approach to renew its purpose and ensure its relevance into the future. While continuing to provide its traditional free science education to the public, the Institute expanded its existing mission and programming to include the preservation and interpretation of the site as a sort of "meta-artifact."[87] The institution became aware of the importance of preserving the site – the building, collections, and displays – *as it is* for the sake of the story it tells about science history, its own history, and the preservation of the site itself and to give it

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[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.

another life as a museum. In a recent article on the Wagner Free Institute, a writer described the concept in the following manner:

> Partly by accident, partly by design, this hidden spot has quietly evolved into something else – a museum of a museum, a place that has captured the architecture of information as it was understood a century or so ago. And that this place has survived may be an even bigger phenomenon than time travel itself.[88]

Without the documentation and external validation of its significance through its National Historic Landmark designation, it is questionable that the Institute would have redefined itself as a museum of a nineteenth century science institution. Most institutions fear any change, much less a radical rethinking of mission and programming. As the case of the Wagner Free Institute illustrates however, the only way for struggling historic sites and institutions to recapture or redefine their relevance is to transform the organization from within and change the institutional culture to adopt a willingness to change and to make itself relevant.[89] For the Wagner, securing designation as a National Historic Landmark did not instantly solve its problems but served as the stimulus for this much needed internal transformation which in turn helped the institution and the historic site to be relevant again.

Accessing Direct and Indirect Benefits of National Historic Landmark Status

Once the Wagner Free Institute secured designation and developed a strategic plan for reviving the institution and preserving its property, it employed its National Historic Landmark status to raise awareness and funding to meet its capital needs (e.g., replacing the main roof, rehabilitating the library, and restoring windows). Most funders require that

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[88] Wayne Curtis, "Evolution on Hold," *Preservation* 52, no. 4 (2001): 52.
[89] Glassman, interview.

building projects also include outreach and programming (i.e., there must be a clear public benefit to support bricks-and-mortar) and they consider the health of the organization in addition to the significance of the resource and the quality of the project plan. The Wagner, because of the organizational strategy it had developed around its National Historic Landmark designation, was and continues to be well suited to addressing these kinds of requirements. Several key points can be learned from the Institute's experience.

As discussed in **Chapter 3**, National Historic Landmarks are eligible for a handful of direct benefits specifically because of their status. The Wagner has received recognition and attention by the Federal government and technical assistance from the National Park Service. In addition, as a National Historic Landmark and a National Register property, the Institute was eligible to apply for and was awarded a major Save America's Treasures grant and several Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Keystone Historic Preservation Grants. Save America's Treasures restricts funding to National Historic Landmarks, while the State Historic Preservation Office in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, awards Keystone Historic Preservation Grants only to resources listed in the National Register. The Wagner plans to approach the J. Paul Getty Trust for an architectural conservation grant, another example of funding for which the institution is eligible because of its National Historic Landmark designation.[90]

Adding to these direct types of support, the Wagner has been successful in leveraging its designation to gain access also to indirect and sometimes intangible benefits as a result of its National Historic Landmark designation.

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[90] Ibid.

National Historic Landmark designation represents substantial recognition of national significance and overall integrity by the Federal government. This external validation of the resource, its significance, and its preservation can inspire tremendous support both internally (e.g., the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, members) and in its community (e.g., local leaders, corporations, foundations, the media). In addition, it can serve to underscore the importance of the organization's plans and to encourage buy-in for conservation efforts, fundraising campaigns, or changes to programming.

Along the same lines, like Eastern State, the Wagner has found that, with those funders for whom National Historic Landmark designation is not an eligibility requirement, such status is still a valuable distinction. Designation as a National Historic Landmark speaks of the applicant's extraordinary national significance. By explicitly identifying the resource as a National Historic Landmark, an organization can draw immediate attention to its proposal during any preliminary review and set itself apart from what may be hundreds of worthy applicants.

Finally, funding for National Historic Landmarks can help attract additional support for an organization and site. When an organization receives a prestigious grant from a prominent national funder – namely Save America's Treasures – the award can serve as validation for the organization's efforts to all other potential funders. By publicizing major grants as part of an overall strategy, an organization can use this endorsement on the part of a philanthropic leader – paired with the government recognition that comes with designation itself – to further distinguish itself and to communicate its national historic

significance. In its recent fundraising efforts, the Wagner has found that "with every 'big' grant, it becomes that much easier to make the case and get other grants."[91]

Over a decade has passed since the Wagner Free Institute actively designation as a National Historic Landmark. Compared to the New Century Guild, the Wagner has the benefit of this time span in which it has developed sophistication in its use of designation to support its organizational and building-related plans. Contrasted with Eastern State, the Wagner has retained its use, is of a manageable size and complexity, and is not severely threatened by deterioration and development. All of these factors improved its chances for success. Designation has served in many ways as an effective strategic decision on the part of the Institute, helping it to rethink its relevance and purpose as an institution and as a site, to develop a new multi-faceted approach to its programming and interpretative focus, and to raise awareness, support, and funding to implement its organizational, programmatic, and preservation efforts.

[91] Ibid.

Figure 7. The Wagner Free Institute of Science. Exterior, Montgomery Avenue and Seventeenth Street façades. (Photograph by author, 2002.)

Figure 8. The Wagner Free Institute of Science. Interior, exhibition hall showing display cases, specimens, and school group. (Photograph by author, 2001.)

7. Conclusion

The National Historic Preservation Act structures the preservation activities of the United States at the Federal, state, and local levels. Authorized by this legislation, the Department of the Interior has established regulations for the identification, documentation, recognition, and some levels of protection and support for the country's historic resources, including those possessing the highest national significance, National Historic Landmarks. The National Historic Landmarks Program of the National Park Service is responsible for implementing these regulations on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior. Through this program, National Historic Landmarks are designated and have access to technical, planning, and informational services.

Overall, this structure functions successfully in spotlighting nationally significant historic sites. Despite the elevated status of National Historic Landmarks, however, few direct benefits accompany designation. Unlike nationally significant places that are recognized officially through designation as units of the National Park System, National Historic Landmarks are not acquired by the Federal government (and therefore may remain the property of private owners and continue to function as they had before designation) and do not receive Federal funding. The National Historic Landmarks Program is limited in what is able to achieve by softly-worded legislation in the National Historic Preservation Act (e.g., Section 106) and the funding it receives from Congress.

It remains a question why other entities committed to preservation (e.g., the National Trust for Historic Preservation) often fail to target support directly to National Historic Landmarks and, rather, spread their support broadly to all National Register properties. Adding to the dilemma, while the J. Paul Getty Architectural Conservation Program and the Save America's Treasures Program do support National Historic Landmarks exclusively, their grants are not really substantial enough for National Historic Landmarks as a collection. In both cases, competition is great for a limited number of awards, and the amounts of the individual grants are not large relative to the considerable costs of conservation efforts necessary to preserve and maintain many sites.

National Historic Landmarks are not immune to challenges related to management, maintenance, public awareness, funding, relevance, programming, and interpretation, or to threats to their integrity. As America's most significant historical resources, however, National Historic Landmarks should not be ignored as they face these challenges and threats. The honor of such designation should be accompanied by a comparable level of direct support and protection.

The three examples explored in this study show how, despite the limitations of direct benefits available, National Historic Landmark status can provide a framework for leveraging indirect and often intangible resources. The recognition bestowed on such a property by the Federal government can be a powerful stimulus to attracting the attention and commitment of private funders, government leaders, and community members and have an impact on the attitudes and behaviors of the organization that owns and/or manages the site as well. The extent to which designation is used successfully in this

manner depends on the institutional capability of the owner or steward and the strategies developed to respond to the property's needs.

The first case study, Eastern State Penitentiary, is an example of how a site can be under tremendous threats despite its National Historic Landmark status, and how recognition of its national significance can engender broad-based support for saving it and using it creatively for the benefit and education of the public. The second, the New Century Guild, illustrates how a site and an organization can feel little impact from its National Historic Landmark status for years, and then look to its designation as a stimulus and a guide for renewing itself as a service provider and a historic site. Finally, the Wagner Free Institute, demonstrates how pursuing National Historic Landmark designation can be the foundation of a strategic plan by providing the external validation needed to change institutional attitudes, to define a site's relevance, to raise money, and to gain support internally and externally.

National Historic Landmark designation is not a "mysterious force field" that shields properties from all challenges and threats, but it is also not a useless distinction. Designation can serve as an honor as well as a practical tool. It can be effective and versatile in securing the necessary support, both limited direct assistance and indirect assistance, to protect, preserve, and manage a site. National Historic Landmarks are valuable, tangible, irreplaceable expressions of the rich and complex American experience. The strategies for leveraging National Historic Landmark designation presented in this study should serve as models for other National Historic Landmarks (and for potential National Historic Landmarks) to find a level of support commensurate with their historical

and cultural value and their select status and to ensure their preservation for the benefit of future generations of Americans.

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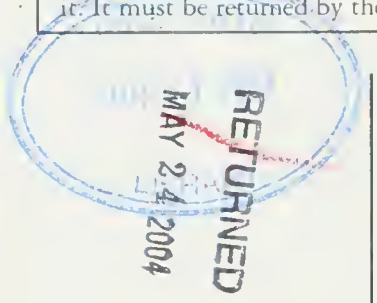

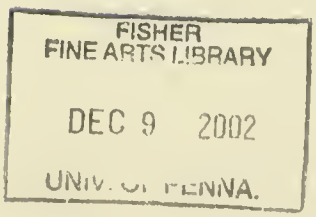

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